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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/49/610/Add.2)]

49/195. Strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/135 of 15 December 1989, 45/180 of 21 December 1990, 46/111 and 46/118 of 17 December 1991, 47/127 of 18 December 1992 and 48/129 and 48/141 of 20 December 1993, and bearing in mind all relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights,

Considering that the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the basic purposes of the United Nations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and a priority activity of the Organization,

Bearing in mind that the Secretary-General, in his reports on the work of the Organization for 1992 and 1994, stated that the Charter of the United Nations placed the promotion of human rights as a priority objective, along with promoting development and preserving international peace and security, 1/ and that the continuous increase in requests is increasing the workload of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat and placing ever greater demands on its resources, 2/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/47/1), para. 100.

2/ A/49/1, para. 387.

Taking into account that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, concerned by the growing disparity between the activities of the Centre and the human, financial and other resources available to carry them out, and bearing in mind the resources needed for other important United Nations programmes, requested the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to take immediate steps to increase substantially the resources for the human rights programme from within the existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations, and to take urgent steps to seek increased extrabudgetary resources, 3/

Taking into account also the establishment of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the mandate for the post, including its coordinating role and its overall supervision of the Centre, as well as the request by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/141 for appropriate staff and resources to enable the High Commissioner to fulfil his mandate,

Taking into account further the fact that the responsibilities of the High Commissioner include, inter alia, engaging in a dialogue with all Governments in the implementation of his mandate with a view to the promotion and protection of all human rights, and rationalizing, adapting, strengthening and streamlining the United Nations machinery in the field of human rights with a view to improving its efficiency and effectiveness,

Noting that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights stressed the importance of strengthening the Centre, 4/

Noting also that the difficult financial situation of the Centre has created considerable obstacles to the implementation of the various procedures and mechanisms and has negatively influenced the servicing by the Secretariat of the human rights bodies concerned,

Noting with appreciation the measures already taken by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Head of the Centre for Human Rights, aimed at improving the administration and management of the Centre,

Acknowledging that, while further improvement in the functioning and efficiency of the Centre, together with a strong emphasis on good management practices, is needed in order to enable the Centre to cope with its constantly increasing workload, good management practices need to be complemented by additional resources commensurate with additional mandates,

Recalling that in its report to the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council, 5/ the Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed that the paramount consideration in the employment of staff at every level was the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and that it was convinced that that was compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, and bearing in mind Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations,

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3/ See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III, sect. II, para. 9.

4/ Ibid., para. 13.

5/ E/CN.4/1988/85 and Corr.1, para. 30.

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General, 6/

Taking note also of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 7/

1. Supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance the role and importance of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, under the overall supervision of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

2. Requests the Secretary-General and Member States to ensure that appropriate additional financial, material and personnel resources are provided in 1994-1995 from within the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 8/ to enable the Centre and the High Commissioner to carry out, in full and on time, the respective mandates assigned to them by the competent bodies dealing with human rights;

3. Calls upon the Secretary-General to include in his submission for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, giving due regard to development and other priority activities of the United Nations, human and financial resources for United Nations human rights activities, adequate to respond to the increase in mandated activities in order to enable the Centre and the High Commissioner to carry out their respective mandates efficiently and effectively;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to make available additional human and financial resources:

(a) To the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights so as to enhance his ability to coordinate effectively human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system, including the provision of advisory services and technical assistance;

(b) To the Centre so as to strengthen its ability to discharge all its mandates, as well as its ability to deal with administrative and budgetary matters, including the provision of advisory services;

(c) To the High Commissioner and the Centre so as to enhance their ability to carry out mandated operational activities and to coordinate efficiently with other relevant parts of the United Nations system on logistical and administrative questions;

5. Emphasizes that, while steps are being taken to improve the administrative efficiency of the Centre, and while it has noted with appreciation the measures recently taken by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Head of the Centre for Human Rights, aimed at improving the management of the Centre, further steps should be undertaken to analyse the present and future utilization of available human and financial resources as well as additional measures to improve further the administrative efficiency and effectiveness of the Centre, if required with appropriate technical assistance;

6/ A/49/595.

7/ A/49/36.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/48/6/Rev.1); and ibid., Supplement No. 6A (A/48/6/Rev.1/Add.1).

6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-first session and a final report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the strengthening of the Centre and on the measures taken to implement the present resolution.

94th plenary meeting
23 December 1994